REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §§ 102, 103

Claims 1, 2, 4 – 6 and 8 – 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,185,213 to Katsube et al. Claims 3 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Katsube teaches a packet transfer control method in which a dedicated VPI cut-through path for a specific destination network and a dedicated VCI cut-through path for a specific end-to-end packet flow are predetermined and stored in a memory unit of a communications node by a controller. An ATM cell having a VPI/VCI value equal to a VPI/VCI cut-through path may be quickly transmitted via the cut-through path without further routing analysis. Cut-through paths are added or changed via messages between communications nodes.

Applicants independent claims 1, 5, 9 and 12 disclose a packet transfer apparatus for switching and transferring a cell or frame signal between first and second nodes and a routing device. Applicants' claimed system includes a switch, a memory and a shortcut controller. In sharp contrast to the system of Katsube, Applicants' shortcut controller monitors outgoing route data contained in a cell or frame signal coming from the routing device, stores this route data in a memory, and determines whether incoming cell or frame signals contain outgoing route information equal to a value stored in the memory. If a match is found, the controller causes the switch to transfer the cell or frame signal from the first node to the second node via a shortcut. This claimed approach differs in several significant ways from the approach of Katsube.

First, in contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, the system of Katsube provides cut-through for predetermined, dedicated VPI/VCI cut-through paths. In sharp contrast, Applicants' claimed system operates to collect routing information in an ongoing fashion according to actual routing selections made by the router so that shortcuts may be dynamically formed consistent with these routing selections.

Relatedly, in contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, the system of Katsube requires active messaging with other nodes and routers in order to update the list of cut-throughs. Applicants' monitor the transmitted packets, and thereby avoid the need for supplementary messaging to update the short-cut list.

Accordingly, Applicants' respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 5, 9 and 12 are not anticipated by Katsube, and therefore stand in condition for allowance. As claims 2- 4, 6 – 8, 10 – 11 and 13 – 14 respectively depend from allowable claims 1, 5, 9 and 12, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2- 4, 6 – 8, 10 – 11 and 13 – 14 stand in condition for allowance for at least this reason.

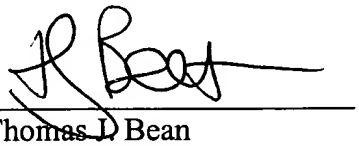
CONCLUSION

An earnest effort has been made to be fully responsive to the Examiner's objections. In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that claims 1 – 14, which include independent claims 1, 5, 9 and 12 and the claims that depend therefrom, stand in condition for allowance. Passage of this case to allowance is earnestly solicited. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, he is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Attached is a marked up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached pages are captioned **"Version With Markings To Show Changes Made"**.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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